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SHEPTON MALLETT
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Including the Report of the Senior Sanitary Inspector

For the Year Ending
31st December, 1951

Shepton Mallet Rural District Council

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS :

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH (PART TIME)

DR. T. E. COULSON, M.D., F.R.C.S.E.

HEALTH VISITORS :

MISS C. J. WOOD, CANNARD'S GRAVE, SHEPTON MALLET.

MISS I. M. ABBOTT, HIGH STREET, GLASTONBURY.

SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR :

A. E. T. NETTING, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., CERT. R.S.I. & S.I.E.J. BOARD.

CERT. MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

ADDITIONAL SANITARY INSPECTORS :

F. C. POWELL, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., CERT., R.S.I., & S.I.E.J. BOARD.

CERT. MEAT & OTHER FOODS (to 12. 5. 51).

J. J. LAWRENCE, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., CERT., R.S.I., & S.I.E.J. BOARD.

CERT. MEAT & OTHER FOODS (from 2. 7. 51).

CLERICAL ASSISTANT :

MISS M. E. BROWN.

WINCANTON,
SOMERSET.

June, 1952.

TO THE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF SHEPTON MALLET.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADY SHEELAH GREENWAY AND GENTLEMEN,—

I beg to lay before you my Annual Report for the year 1951.

1.—GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (in acres)	....	....	....	....	....	47,784
Population (1951)	....	....	....	....	....	10,860
Number of Inhabited Houses	....	....	....	....	....	3,247
Rateable Value	....	....	....	....	....	£45,002
Produce of a Penny Rate (estimated)	....	....	....	....	....	£176

2.—EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

BIRTHS.

LIVE BIRTHS :—				Males.	Females.
Total	....	....	....	78	81
Legitimate	....	....	....	75	79
Illegitimate	....	....	....	3	2

Birth Rate : 15.5 per 1,000.

STILLBIRTHS :—

Total	....	....	....	1	2
Legitimate	....	....	....	1	2
Illegitimate	....	....	....	0	0

Birth Rate : 0.36 per 1,000.

DEATHS.

	Total.	Males.	Females.	
Deaths from all causes :	143	82	61	Death Rate 12.5 per 1,000
Number of Women dying in, or in consequence of childbirth :—				
(a) From Sepsis	....	....	....	0
(b) From other causes	....	....	....	0

Deaths of Infants under One Year of Age :—

		Males.	Females.
Total	....	4	1
Legitimate	....	4	1
Illegitimate	....	0	0

Deaths of Infants under One Week 3

„ „ „ from One to Four Weeks (inclusive) 1
 „ „ „ from One to Six Months 1
 „ „ „ from Six to Twelve Months 0

Total 5

Deaths from Measles (all ages) 0
 „ „ Whooping Cough (all ages) 0
 „ „ Diarrhoea (under two years) 0

There has not been any excessive mortality during the year.

The total number of Deaths occurring in the District was 143, compared with 134 in 1950.

The chief causes of Death were :—

Heart Disease and Diseases of the Circulatory System	....	34
Cancer	....	23
Cerebral Haemorrhage	....	18
Old Age	....	14

In all "Causes of Death" :—

Those dying between the ages of 75 and 80 were 28
 „ „ „ 81 and 85 „ 25
 „ „ „ 86 and 90 „ 18
 And dying above the age of 90 2

A total of 73 or 51.04 per cent. of the total Deaths.

OLD AGE.

The Annual Abstract of Statistics (No. 88) shews the ageing population of the United Kingdom. Between 1871 and 1950 the total population of the United Kingdom increased by 85%, while the number of people aged 65 and over rose by 300%. In 1871 there were 604,000 men and 730,000 women aged 65 and over, in 1950 the corresponding totals were 2,271,000 men and 3,160,000 women. It is estimated that by 1980 these totals will be increased by 7%.

These figures go a long way to shew the necessity for Local Authorities to carry out their statutory obligations to provide for the care of the aged and infirm. The powers under which Local Authorities can act are set out in the : National Assistance Act, 1948 ; Housing Acts, 1936 and 1949 ; Physical Training and Recreation Act, 1937 ; and Public Health Act, 1936.

The Birmingham Statistical Unit, in an analysis of several hundred cases of the old and infirm, divided them into four Groups :—

- GROUP 1. 40% required admission to Hospital. The Public Assistance Institutions and large Hospitals have long waiting lists and the smaller Hospitals are averse to the admission of these long-stay cases owing to shortage of Nursing Staff.
- GROUP 2. 10% required admission to a Mental Hospital. Some of these are borderline cases and are hardly certifiable as lunatics. How to deal with some of these cases is the most difficult problem.
- GROUP 3. 24% required admission to a " Hostel " or " Eventide Homes." Some Local Authorities have built, with or without grants from the National Corporation for the Care of Old People, " Eventide Homes " with a Warden and his wife (the latter preferably with Nursing experience) in charge. These, I understand, have been a great success.
- GROUP 4. 26% are best treated at home with the aid of District Nurses, the Social Services provided by Local Authorities, Home Helps and good neighbours.

I fully realise that what I have written is merely an outline of a difficult and increasingly important subject which, I contend, is worthy of some consideration, when young married couples who are anxious to have children have been accommodated.

3.—NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Isolation Hospitals.	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	3	0	0
Dysentery	5	0	0
Measles	101	0	0
Whooping Cough	45	0	0
Pneumonia	1	0	10
Acute Poliomyelitis	3	1	0
Tuberculosis :—			
(a) Respiratory	5	0	1
(b) Non-Respiratory	1	0	0
	164	1	11

The Notification of Infectious Diseases in the District by Medical Practitioners was satisfactory, except in the case of Pneumonia.

4.—OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.

No Cases Notified.

5.—CAUSES OF SICKNESS.

Measles was in evidence throughout the District. The type of the disease was not so mild as usual, but there were no deaths.

Pneumonia caused 10 deaths.

6.—SUMMARY OF NURSING ARRANGEMENTS, HOSPITAL AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE IN THE DISTRICT.

A.—PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME :—

- (1) General :—There are 9 nurses in the District engaged in general district work, who are affiliated to the County Nursing Association, and between them they cover the whole District.
- (2) For Infectious Diseases :—One of the cases of Infectious Disease was removed to an Isolation Hospital, the remainder were either nursed by their relatives or by nurses obtained from Nursing Homes or Hospitals outside the District.

B.—MIDWIVES.

There are 9 Certified Midwives practising in the District.

C.—CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

None in the District.

D.—HOSPITALS SITUATED IN THE DISTRICT.

None.

E.—INSTITUTIONAL PROVISION FOR UNMARRIED MOTHERS, ILLEGITIMATE INFANTS AND HOMELESS CHILDREN.

None.

F.—AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

- (1) For Infectious Cases.—None.
- (2) For Non-Infectious Cases and Accidents.—The Motor Ambulance provided by the County Council, and kept at The Ambulance Station, Commercial Road, Shepton Mallet (Tel. 242), is used when necessary.

G.—SCABIES.

No cases of Scabies have been brought to my notice.

7.—MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PLANNING INQUIRIES.

- (1) Held at Stoke Lane on the 11th April, 1951 for consent to borrow £49,350 for the purposes of Sewerage and Sewage Disposal. The consent for the above was granted.
- (2) Held at Stratton-on-the-Fosse on the 12th April, 1951, for consent to borrow £21,000 for the purpose of Works of Sewerage and Sewage Disposal. Consent for the above was granted.

8.—LABORATORY WORK.

Examinations of bacteriological and pathological specimens are carried out at the Public Health Laboratory at Taunton and considerable use of this Laboratory has been made during the year.

A supply of Diphtheria Antitoxin is kept by Messrs. Boots (Chemists) and Miss Watkins (Chemist) at Shepton Mallet, and can be obtained by Practitioners on the National Health Service Prescription Form.

9.—FOOD POISONING.

No cases have been notified during the year.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

1.—WATER.

Owing to the heavy summer rainfall in 1951, very little shortage of water was experienced. Only in the Parishes of Ditchet and Stratton-on-the-Fosse was any restriction necessary and then only for a short period in July and August.

The chlorinated supplies have been excellent in quality, but the smaller non-chlorinated supplies have all shown evidence of considerable contamination following the heavy rainfall preceded by dry weather—i.e. Autumn.

ACTION TAKEN RESPECTING ANY FORM OF CONTAMINATION.

Reservoirs and collecting systems at Lamyatt and West Bradley were cleaned and chlorinated.

PARTICULARS OF ANY EXTENSIONS OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES.

661 lin. yds. 3in. main laid to afford supply to Kale Street, Batcombe.

602 lin. yds. 4in. main laid to afford supply to Council housing site at Oakhill, parish of Ashwick.

Both the above new mains will, in due course, become incorporated in the Council's major water supply scheme now in progress.

FUTURE PROPOSALS.

The Council now have in progress a major scheme for the Augmentation and extension of their water supply and distribution system. This scheme will, when completed, make good the present deficiency in quantity within the Rural district, will afford a piped supply to those parishes now without a supply and will replace, in other parishes, the existing unsatisfactory private supplies. In addition, supplies of water in bulk will be afforded to Frome R.D.C. for their Leigh-on-Mendip and Wanstrow areas.

Detailed results of bacteriological examinations carried out during the year are as follows :—

(a) PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES.

1. CHLORINATED SUPPLIES.

Number of Samples taken	....	....	....	....	60
Satisfactory	....	....	....	....	60
Not quite satisfactory	....	....	....	....	0
Unsatisfactory	....	....	....	....	0

2. UNTREATED SUPPLIES.

Number of samples taken	....	....	....	....	47
Satisfactory	....	....	....	....	18
Not quite satisfactory	....	....	....	....	13
Unsatisfactory	....	....	....	....	16

(b) PRIVATE PIPED WATER SUPPLIES USED BY PUBLIC (UNTREATED).

Number of samples taken	....	....	....	....	5
Satisfactory	....	....	....	....	2
Not quite satisfactory	....	....	....	....	0
Unsatisfactory	....	....	....	....	3

(c) OTHER PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES (INDIVIDUAL PREMISES, FARMS, ETC.).

Number of samples taken	....	....	....	....	16
Satisfactory	....	....	....	....	1
Not quite satisfactory	....	....	....	....	3
Unsatisfactory	....	....	....	....	12

16 samples were taken for chemical analysis during the year from the Public Supplies and Piped supplies used by the Public. In all cases the results showed the water to be satisfactory in purity. The water from the majority of these supplies, however, was found to be very hard, the hardness being mainly temporary.

There is no liability to plumbo-solvent action from any of the water supplies.

Appropriate action was taken in all cases of unsatisfactory results, except those in connection with the Council's own supplies, none of which were consistently unsatisfactory.

Available figures in relation to the supply of water in the various parishes are :—

Parish.	No. of houses.	No. having piped water supply into or on to the houses.	No. of houses supplied by stand-pipe.	No. supplied by well or other supplies
Ashwick	330	262	47	21
Batcombe	136	71	23	42
Binegar	89	67	20	2
W. Bradley	92	74	12	6
Cranmore	120	62	36	22
Crocombe	176	60	95	21
Ditchheat	198	171	23	4
Doulting	164	116	26	22
Downhead	33	4	13	16
Emborough	50	37	11	2
Evercreech	432	366	46	20
Holcombe	190	171	19	—
Lamyatt	47	31	1	15
Lydford	120	9	12	99
Milton Clevedon	35	18	14	3
East Pennard	129	59	15	55
Pilton	237	189	24	24
Pylle	51	12	5	34
Stoke Lane	222	175	36	11
Stratton-on-the-Fosse	444	374	59	11
	<hr/> 3295 <hr/>	<hr/> 2328 <hr/>	<hr/> 537 <hr/>	<hr/> 430 <hr/>

2.—DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

No extension of sewers or other improvements were carried out during the year except in connection with the Council's own housing schemes.

FUTURE PROPOSALS.

i. STOKE LANE.

An extensive sewerage scheme for this parish is rendered necessary by reason of its proximity to the Council's new sources of water supply at Ashwick Grove and St. Dunstan's Well. Tenders have been invited for the works.

ii. EVERCREECH.

The existing sewerage system and disposal works in this parish is greatly overloaded and the Council's Consulting Engineers have prepared an extensive scheme of improvements. This is at present being examined by the Council.

iii. STRATTON-ON-THE-FOSSE.

A scheme for sewerage of the Stratton-on-the-Fosse village area and provision of new sewage disposal works has been submitted to the Ministry of Local Government and Planning for consideration.

iv. CROSCOMBE.

A scheme for new sewerage and sewage disposal works for the village of Croscombe has been submitted to the Ministry of Local Government and Planning for consideration and application has been made for grant under the Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act, 1944.

v. GURNEY SLADE.

An outline scheme for the sewerage of this village has been prepared but it is likely that the cost will prove prohibitive.

3.—HOUSE REFUSE COLLECTION.

The Council's Karrier CK 3 lorry with a crew of driver and two loaders continued to give satisfactory service. This is the fifth year that the whole district has been served and household refuse has been removed by direct labour. During the year, the lorry has travelled 11,304 miles, collecting approximately 1,723 tons of refuse.

Moorwood tip continued to be in use during the year and the tip at Evercreech came into operation after preliminary works of bulldozing.

The same schedule of collection operated as for last year.

4.—SALVAGE—WASTE PAPER RECOVERY.

In April, the Council brought into operation a scheme for the collection of waste paper and cardboard on a small scale. Collection is worked in conjunction with the collection of house refuse. Up to the end of the year, some 22 tons of waste paper and cardboard have been collected and dispatched to the merchants. Gross receipts during this period were £209 12s. 6d. which has put the scheme on a sound economic basis.

5.—SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following report has been furnished to me by the Senior Sanitary Inspector under Article 27 of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations, 1935.

The Inspector's time was taken up for the most part by visits in connection with meat and food inspection, investigation of complaints and subsequent action, applications for Council houses and building licensing control. The increase in the numbers of animals, especially pigs, being sent to Pylle Slaughterhouse for emergency and casualty slaughter, has entailed more time being spent at the slaughterhouse by the inspectors, and at the year's end there was no sign of any decrease in casualty slaughtering.

During the year the routine inspection of all food establishments was commenced and the Rural Housing Survey was resumed on a small scale, as time was found to be available.

Statutory Action under the Public Health Acts was kept to a minimum, informal action securing the abatement of nuisances in the majority of complaints investigated.

(a) VISITS.

The following visits were made during the year :—

Dwellinghouses ....	....	....	....	....	....	678
Housing Act—Overcrowding	....	....	....	....	....	2
Infectious Disease	....	....	....	....	....	7
Factories	....	....	....	....	....	15
Bakehouses	....	....	....	....	....	18
Cowsheds, Dairies, Milkshops	....	....	....	....	....	11
Food Premises	....	....	....	....	....	105
Ice-Cream Premises	....	....	....	....	....	12
Meat Inspection and Slaughterhouse	....	....	....	....	....	506
Council Houses	....	....	....	....	....	273
Rats and Mice Suppression	....	....	....	....	....	626
Refuse Collection	....	....	....	....	....	112
Refuse Disposal	....	....	....	....	....	36
Drainage	....	....	....	....	....	15
Water Supplies	....	....	....	....	....	33
Verminous Premises	....	....	....	....	....	10
Control of Civil Building	....	....	....	....	....	69

Moveable Dwellings	....	....	....	....	....	27
Salvage	....	....	....	....	....	21
Rural Housing Survey	....	....	....	....	....	121
Schools	....	....	....	....	....	23
Public Houses	....	....	....	....	....	45
Butchers	....	....	....	....	....	23
Canteens and Restaurants	....	....	....	....	....	9
Shops Acts	....	....	....	....	....	12
Miscellaneous Visits	....	....	....	....	....	162
(b) NOTICES.				Informal.	Statutory.	
Served	....	....	....	132	0	
Complied with	....	....	....	108	0	
Outstanding	....	....	....	75	0	

(c) LIST OF WORKS EXECUTED AS A RESULT OF NOTICES.

INTERNAL WORK.

ROOMS.

Damp remedied	....	....	....	....	....	19
Stripped, cleansed and re-decorated	....	....	....	....	....	16
Plaster repaired	....	....	....	....	....	20
Floors repaired	....	....	....	....	....	9
Windows repaired	....	....	....	....	....	18
Ranges, Stoves repaired	....	....	....	....	....	2
Doors, repaired	....	....	....	....	....	4
Ventilated Foodstores provided	2
Coppers Provided	3

STAIRCASES.

Repairs	6
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SANITARY FITMENTS.

Privies and Pails abolished	4
W.C.'s substituted for privies	4
W.C.'s repaired	....	....	....	....	....	17
W.W. waterpipes repaired or renewed	....	....	....	....	....	3

DRAINS.

Unstopped or repaired	....	....	....	....	....	20
New drains	....	....	....	....	....	6
Gullies repaired	....	....	....	....	....	9
New sinks	....	....	....	....	....	1

WATER SUPPLIES AND FITTINGS.

New services	....	....	....	....	....	6
Repaired or renewed	....	....	....	....	....	8

EXTERNAL WORKS.

Roofs repaired	....	....	....	....	....	30
Gutters and R.W. pipes repaired	....	....	....	....	....	5
Walls repaired	....	....	....	....	....	3
Yards repaired	....	....	....	....	....	3
Chimneys repaired	....	....	....	....	....	6
Accumulations removed	....	....	....	....	....	9

SHOPS.

Heating	....	....	....	....	....	2
Light or ventilation	....	....	....	....	....	7
Washing facilities	....	....	....	....	....	4
General Defects remedied	....	....	....	....	....	5

(d) SMOKE ABATEMENT. (DUST).

No nuisance from smoke was reported during the year, but informal action was necessary in certain cases in respect of dust from stone quarries, with satisfactory results.

(e) CAMPING SITES.

There are no licensed camping sites in the district.

(f) RAG FLOCK ACT, 1911 AND 1928.

There are no premises in the district in which rag flock is manufactured or sold.

(g) RATS AND MICE.

The Council's part-time Rodent operator continued to deal with infested premises during the year. Very few complaints were received.

(h) INSECT PESTS.

Very few cases of infestation have been reported, 3 cases of flea infestation only having been dealt with.

FACTORIES.

1.—Inspection for purpose of provisions as to health.

Premises. (i).	Number on Register. (ii).	Inspections. (iii).	Written Notices (iv).	Occupiers Prosecuted. (v).
i. Factories in which Section 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	15	2	1	—
ii. Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 applies :— (a) Subject to the local Authorities (trans- fer of Enforcement) Order, 1938. (b) Others.	51	23	3	—
iii. Other premises under the Act (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Total	66	25	4	Nil

2.—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

Particulars.	Number of cases in which defects were found.				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred To H.M. Inspector.	By H.M. Inspector.	
Want of cleanliness (S1)	1	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation (S4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (S7)					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	3	2	—	2	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences (not including of- fences relating to Homework)	—	—	—	—	—
Total	4	2	—	2	—

3.—OUTWORKERS.

There were 38 outworkers in the district all employed in the gloving industry by firms outside the district.

HOUSING.

1.—ACTION UNDER HOUSING ACT, 1936.—(Sec. 9 and Sec. 11).

GENERAL REMARKS.

Again, it was not found possible to undertake any formal action under Section 9, but informal action was carried out and repairs effected wherever possible. The acute housing shortage prevented formal action under Section 11, for the securing of demolition or closure of worn-out property in all but the most acute cases. Demolition proceedings were initiated in one case but the Council accepted an undertaking from the owner that the house would not be occupied until made fit. No demolition orders were made. Three cottages, which were subject to demolition orders previously made, became vacant and were demolished by the owner.

2.—Overcrowding.

Two cases of overcrowding occurred during the year, but four cases were abated during this period, all being provided with accommodation in Council houses.

3.—HOUSING ACT, 1949—IMPROVEMENT GRANT.

No applications were received during the year. Of two applications received during 1950, one was rejected by the Council during 1951 and the remaining one was still under consideration at the end of 1951.

4.—HOUSING PROGRAMME.

Forty Council houses were completed and occupied during the year, an increase of 7 on the previous year's figure of 33.

The number of applicants on the waiting list on December 31st was 222, a decrease of 104 over the year before. The decrease during the year results from a comprehensive check of the housing list.

Total number of applications for Council Houses at the close of the year. (In rooms 65)	222
Number of houses erected by the Local Authority during the year	40
Number of houses in course of erection by Local Authority	11
Number of Houses erected by Private Enterprise during the year	8
Number of houses in course of erection by Private Enterprise	8
Number of unfit houses licensed for habitation	21
Number of houses continuing to be requisitioned by the Council	25
Number of houses previously condemned but still occupied	9

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

1.—MILK SUPPLY.

Number of Retailers (not producers)	6
Heat Treatment Plants	1

DESIGNATED MILK.

Number of Retailers T.T. Milk	3
Number of Retailers Pasteurised Milk	1

2.—ICE-CREAM.

No. of premises registered for :—

(a) Manufacture	Nil.
(b) Sale	28

Samples were regularly taken from the various retailers, most of whom were selling pre-packed ice-cream from well-known manufacturers.

3.—PRESERVED FOODS, ETC.—Sec. 14 Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

No. of persons registered for the Manufacture of sausages under the above	5
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4.—INSPECTION OF FOOD PREMISES.

During the year a start was made on the routine inspection of all premises where food is sold or prepared (including Restaurants, Canteens and food factories). Action was taken as necessary under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938 and under the Council's Clean Food Byelaws, but generally the standard was found to be good and the co-operation of the proprietors of such premises satisfactory.

5.—MEAT AND OTHER FOODS. (INSPECTIONS AND CONDEMNATIONS).

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed	1117	1145	6099	3738	927
Number inspected	1117	1145	6099	3738	927
ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS.					
Whole carcasses condemned	44		48	25	44
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	1008		24	301	385
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	46.5		1.18	8.72	46.28
TUBERCULOSIS ONLY.					
Whole carcasses condemned	43		5	—	10
Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned	520		1	—	74
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	24.89		0.10	—	9.06

Total Weight of Diseased/Unsound food condemned : 41 tons 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ cwt.

OTHER FOODS SURRENDERED.

3 × 12oz. Tins corned beef	Blown condition.
23lbs. hind veal	Decomposition.
3 Calves heads	Decomposition.
1 × 6lb. tin Ox Tongue	Decomposition.
2 × 5½lbs. tins Boneless Ham	Blown.
3 × 12oz. tins Pork Luncheon meat	Blown.
1 × 12oz. tin Ham loaf	Decomposition.
1 × 11lb. tin Shoulder Ham	Decomposition.
1 × 10lb. tin Apricot Pulp	Blown and soured.

6.—BYELAWS UNDER SECTION 15 OF THE FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1938.

These came into operation in the Shepton Mallet Rural District in July, 1950. During 1951, 15 Notices were served in respect of exposed foodstuffs, inadequate refuse bins and insufficient lighting and all were complied with.

7.—SLAUGHTERHOUSES.

Number of Registered Slaughterhouses	....	....	....	Nil.
Number of Licensed Slaughterhouses	....	....	....	2
Number of Slaughterhouses in use under Ministry of Food	....	....	....	1
Licensed Knackers Yard	....	....	....	Nil.

Minor improvements were carried out at the Slaughterhouse in use under the Ministry of Food at Pylle, but the premises still leave much to be desired, particularly in respect of lighting and water supply.

8.—SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACT, 1933.

A register of all licensed slaughtermen pursuant to Section 3 (1) of the above Act is kept, and the number so licensed is 10.

I have the honour to be, Mr. Chairman, Lady Sheelah and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

T. E. COULSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

